A Bite of the Big Apple

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A Bite of the Big Apple

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Adam and Nigel plan a short trip to New York during which Harlan gets protective, Nigel has a boxing match, and Adam gets drunk...

Notes

This has taken longer than expected because I am currently very pregnant and lacking a lot of focus when trying to sit down and just wrtite. As the due date was yesterday I am also posting this all up at once rather than chapter by chapter just in case I don't get the chance. I've not had the chance to go over it as much as the others so it might not be quite as a good and there could be mistakes (feel free to point them out!).

There will be more from these two but might not be very soon. That said I am hoping to write a few drabbles of these guys - just little one off ficlets - for Space Dogs Appreciation Week next month (fingers crossed!).

Comments and kudos appreciated as always :D

Chapter 1

“Hello?” Nigel picked up the phone on the fourth ring.

“Uh, hi, I'm trying to reach Adam…”

“He’s in the shower…”

“Oh. Of course… is this Nigel?”

“Who’s this?” Nigel couldn't help but be a little aggravated, immediately set into possessive alpha mode by some strange man calling for his mate. He knew it was clear in his tone and he felt no inclination to curb it.

“This is Harlan. I'm a family friend.” He sounded annoyed.

“Shit, yeah, hi. This is Nigel. Can I get Adam to call you back when he's done?”

“Sure, you do that.” The line clicked.

“Well, that went really fucking well.” Nigel muttered as he put the phone back in the receiver.

*

Adam woke up excited. He had been really happy to talk to Harlan the night before - inviting them to come to New York for a trip. Harlan wanted to meet Nigel and spend some time catching up with Adam. He had been in California for over 8 months and Harlan was glad he was doing well but he seemed hesitant about Nigel. When he’d told Harlan about Nigel after they had bonded, he’d told Adam he was surprised to find he’d suddenly bonded with some strange alpha. Adam had tried to explain that actually it wasn’t that sudden and Nigel wasn’t strange, not anymore than Adam was. Adam was excited about them finally meeting - Harlan was bound to like Nigel once they met because Adam did, he knew that.

“Stop squirming gorgeous.” Nigel sleepily told him. Adam hadn’t realised in his excitement that he had been squirming restlessly against Nigel’s side where he was pressed with one large arm around him. Nigel let his arm relax and release him.

“Sorry, I didn’t realise I was.” Adam replied but still smiling. When Nigel moved his arm, Adam climbed on top of him and Nigel wrapped his arms up around him, holding him still.

Nigel blinked an eye open and looked at him before looking over at the clock at his bedside. “Fuck, Adam it’s only just 6!” Nigel closed his eye again with a groan. “6 on a Saturday. You’re already fucking gorgeous darling, but I need my beauty sleep!”

Adam laughed at the little joke he was sure Nigel had just made, even if he didn’t agree with it literally. Nigel was very attractive, and sleep wasn’t proven to have an effect on attractiveness. He nuzzled into the little bite scar in Nigel’s neck and hummed. “You are very

gorgeous, Nigel." He told his mate, using Nigel's words so he knew he meant it. He felt a little purr in his chest. He buried his face further into Nigel's neck, loving the scratchy feel of the beard Nigel had grown in the last couple of months. Despite the almost perfectly symmetrical grey patches on either side of his chin, the beard made Nigel look younger rather than older and Adam loved how it felt against his skin.

Nigel growled deeply in response and rolled them so he was pinning Adam to the bed. Adam laughed and wrapped his arms up around Nigel's neck to drag him down into a kiss.

"My gorgeous spaceman…" Nigel muttered, breaking their kiss and nuzzling into the bond scar on Adam's neck. Adam did the same and took in Nigel's calming, earthy, alpha scent. Nigel pulled his weight back from the omega and propped himself on his side, smoothing a light hand down Adam's torso which made him purr further. The purr turned to a giggle as Nigel reached a ticklish spot on his hip. The alpha leaned in and swallowed the giggle into a kiss. Adam jumped slightly as Nigel's hand fell lightly on his cock. He had already been a little hard from the kisses, but now he was suddenly very hard and aching at the touch of his alpha and mate. He whimpered into Nigel's mouth. The whimper was met with another growl and a firmer hand. Adam broke the kiss and bit his lower lip as Nigel placed scratchy, open mouth kisses around his neck and stroked his cock firmly but gently.

Adam's needy whimpering turned to moans and gasps as Nigel panted against his neck and stroked faster. Nigel's hand felt so good around Adam's cock, almost as good as his mouth. Adam enjoyed how much Nigel enjoyed his cock. Adam hadn't really known how enjoyable sex could be until he met Nigel. He had had sex with Beth and it had been fun but it had never been as fulfilling as this - she was a beta and the sex with her had been different. He understood now why alphas and omegas needed each other, in every way. He might have been happy with a beta and never really known the difference, but he didn't have to wonder about that now - he had an alpha. He had -

"... Nigel! I'm… I…" Adam stuttered as he tensed up, his fingers and toes curling into the bed sheets. He let out a cry as he came over Nigel's fist which stroked him through his orgasm and slowly came to a stop. The responsive growl in Nigel's chest turned into a deep chuckle as Adam looked at him, flustered and red faced from the sudden and unexpected exertion.

"You're laughing at me." Adam pouted and felt his face redden more.

"No angel, I'd never laugh at you. I'm laughing at myself - you drive me fucking crazy." Nigel kissed him again. "Grab me a towel darling."

Adam was all smiles as he got out of the bed and grabbed a towel from the bathroom, cleaning himself up whilst there. He returned to the bedroom and found Nigel hadn't moved and his eyes were closed again. He sat on the bed and used the towel to clean Nigel's soiled hand before throwing the towel into the hamper. Adam started to snuggle back in the bed as Nigel opened one eye again to look at him. Adam's hands seeking Nigel whilst he placed little kisses along Nigel's bearded jaw.

"What are you doing gorgeous?"

“I was going to, um…” He felt his cheeks go red again. There were some things he still found hard to vocalise even with Nigel. Despite all the sex they had, Adam still was shy about it in many ways. He started to circle his fingers in Nigel’s chest hair but Nigel took his hand and kissed his fingers.

“Darling, I have to be at the gym in three fucking hours, you go have breakfast, I’m going back to sleep. We can resume this later.” He smiled sleepily, still only one eye open as he pulled Adam into a kiss and then pushed him out of the bed.

Adam giggled and did as his alpha suggested, wondering how much later was ‘later’ - maybe he should go back to bed after breakfast.

*

“Nigel, how much morning sex can you guys possibly have, you always look so damn tired everytime I see you.” Lynnette laughed.

Nigel raised an eyebrow at her as he got into the car. Always trying to get a rise out of him, she felt more like an annoying sibling every day, and yet he couldn’t imagine her and Angela not being in his life.

“Lynnette, I know it’s hard for you, but you really should rein in your inner bitch. You should try burning off some of that bitchiness with some exercise… maybe take up boxing.”

She scowled at him but it didn’t hide her grin. “So, Carlos told me about the fight. Why didn’t you tell me?”

Nigel winced. He had hoped that he could keep it a secret a little longer, but knew in the tight group at the gym that would likely be impossible.

He dragged his hand over his face and scratched his beard before replying. “I didn’t want Adam to know…”

It was lucky the traffic was light because Lynnette couldn’t stop herself turning in her seat and glaring at him.

“Oh no, you’re not doing that. You can’t start keeping secrets from him.”

“It was a month ago…”

“How did he not know… Is that why you grew the beard? Managed to hide bruises that way? Damn Nigel. You are in fucking trouble.” Lynnette rarely swore, even at the gym so he knew he was in the wrong, even without the angry tone he hadn’t heard from her in a long time. He already knew without her having to tell him, he knew he should have told Adam.

Carlos had asked to set him up in an amateur bout, he had done it, just to see if he could. He’d been training a few months and Carlos wanted to push him, and it had been great. He’d won the fight, including a small cash fee that made it all the more worthwhile. But he hadn’t been able to tell Adam. The look on his darling’s face every time he came back bruised from training was enough to make him worry about how Adam was handling the boxing - he

wasn’t even sure how to start broaching the subject of fighting in matches. It wasn’t something he had ever planned, but he knew Carlos was keen to push him into more, and that he could do well from it - he was a natural.

Now a month had gone by since the fight, Carlos had others he wanted Nigel to think about and he still hadn’t told Adam.

“There hasn’t been a right time.” Nigel defended himself weakly, avoiding the side eye from Lynnette as they pulled up to the gym.

“Bullshit. Just do it Nigel. He loves you, he trusts you. Even if he is nervous about it, the longer it takes you to tell him the worse it will be. Are you thinking of taking more fights?”

Nigel shrugged. “I’d thought about it.”

“Then tell him. I know you think you’re protecting him, and I’m not so much of a bitch that I’m going to threaten to tell him if you don’t - he’s your omega - but seriously, this will not end well if he does find out. And give him more credit, he can handle it.”

Nigel hoped she was right. He knew deep down she was right, and he knew he’d been an asshole over the whole thing. He resolved to talk to Adam when he got home from the gym.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Nigel comes clean with Adam, they head to New York and Nigel meets Harlan...

Nigel felt like an asshole when he arrived home to smell a steak cooking. Everytime he went to the gym at the weekend Adam insisted on making him a steak. Nigel knew it was because Adam wanted to do something nice and also practical - making sure he was well fed after his workout. Though sometimes the glint in the omega's eyes told him he equally appreciated the thanks he got from Nigel afterwards. Today, after his conversation with Lynnette and then with Carlos trying to set him up with more matches, he knew he didn't deserve Adam's kindness.

He sighed and dropped his gym bag by the door. Adam must have heard him because he called out "3 minutes and 20 seconds" to indicate when the steak would be done.

"Ok." Nigel called back and decided to carry on through to the bedroom. He would have time to strip off his shirt and wash up before eating, he could shower properly afterwards. That had been his thought as he entered the room, but once his shirt was stripped he caught himself in the mirror and sank onto the bed feeling pretty angry with himself and unable to take in his own reflection without being overcome with shame. His torso bearing bruises as well as the scar he had no memory of getting in his past. Bad alpha. Lynnette had been right, he should have told Adam and not telling him would make things worse in the long run, even if he had been trying to protect his beautiful mate. He lay back on the bed and scrunched a balled fist against his forehead. He'd been a fucking idiot.

He didn't realise how many minutes had passed until he heard a small voice in the doorway.

"Are you hurt, Nigel?" Adam asked with clear concern as he came over and looked down at his alpha.

Nigel shook his head. He was hurt, but it was his own doing and how could he explain to Adam? That he'd hurt himself by keeping something from his omega - which to Adam was as good as lying.

"Why are you sad?" the omega asked gently and quietly, having become pretty good at reading Nigel's expressions, or perhaps feeling them through their bond, Nigel considered.

Nigel let the words fall out, almost croaked from his dry throat "I'm sad because I think I'm going to make you sad. And I fucking hate that gorgeous, but…"

Adam interrupted with a light laugh and climbed on top of Nigel, straddling his waist and looking down at him. “That’s silly, you don’t make me sad.”

Adam’s smile broke his heart. He pulled his little spaceman close and scented him.

“Darling, there’s something we need to talk about.” Nigel said, sitting up so that he took Adam with him and kept the omega straddling his lap, firmly in his arms. Adam didn’t reply but his face creased with concern and he pulled back a little in Nigel’s arms to look at him - his direct eye contact letting Nigel know he was taking this seriously.

“Adam, you know I like to box, and I know you worry about me.”

Adam nodded slowly.

“I don’t want you to worry about me because I’m fine. Even if I get beaten up, I know what I’m doing and I’m ok and everything will always be fine…” Nigel realised he was rambling on without really saying what he should. He sighed. “Carlos asked me to take part in a proper match and I did, last month… I won and I was ok, but I should have told you. I didn’t want you to worry about me. I was fine…” Nigel stopped before he sounded like he was making more excuses when he should have told Adam when he agreed to do the fight, fuck, they should have discussed it before he even said yes to Carlos.

Adam sighed and took Nigel’s face in his hands, fingers moving into the short beard. “That was bad of you not to tell me Nigel.”

Nigel was surprised by the reaction, even though Adam had been a lot better with handling bad things since they bonded, it was different when Nigel caused the badness. Adam’s episodes were nowhere near as bad anymore, which was great for them both, but now Nigel wished he would at the least shout at him for being such an idiot. He nuzzled into Adam’s neck.

“I’m so sorry darling. I should have told you, we should have talked about it.” He felt Adam nuzzle into his neck in return and start scenting him, no doubt to maintain his calm. Nigel was sad and angry for having caused even a little distress to Adam. If he needed to scent him then it was more upsetting than he was letting on and that was not ok. He rubbed circles into the base of Adam’s back, gentling him and squeezing him closer when he heard an involuntary whimper escape from the omega.

“I’m so fucking sorry.” Nigel reiterated.

They sat for a few minutes before Adam finally pulled back and looked at him again. “I’m not mad about the fight Nigel, I’m mad that you didn’t tell me. I thought we would tell each other everything.” His eyes were glassy and slightly red from holding back tears.

Nigel laced kisses all over Adam’s beautiful face. “I’m a fucking idiot, I’m sorry.”

“Please don’t keep things from me. Don’t lie to me.” The words escaped from Adam with a little sob, his breathing a little uneven.

“Fuck, I can’t believe I screwed up so badly. I… I’m so sorry.”

Adam took in a deep breath, leaning into Nigel and taking in his scent. “I know you’re trying.” Adam said with a weak smile as he pulled back. “I know you’re not bad any more, you just wanted to protect me. But I need to know these things. You’re my mate, you shouldn’t keep things from me.”

“I know.” Nigel rested his forehead against Adam’s. “I just followed my instincts to protect you and went about it all wrong. Will you forgive me?”

Adam took his face in his hands again and kissed him.

“Yes. Don’t do it again.”

Nigel reclined back onto the bed again with a sigh of relief, pulling Adam tight to his chest. They stayed like that a few minutes before Adam spoke.

“Are you going to fight again? Another match?” he asked.

“Maybe. Carlos has asked me to, he even mentioned possibly setting one up in New York when I mentioned we’re going there next month - he has contacts there. I said I’d let him know.”

Adam hummed thoughtfully. “I think you should.”

Nigel tucked his chin to look down at Adam, knowing he was serious, Adam couldn’t be anything else.

“You’d be ok with that? I might lose, I might get hurt. Would you be ok if that happened?”

“I don’t know. Maybe. But I think… I think I’d like to come and watch… umm, I want to know that everything is ok.”

Nigel frowned. “I’m not sure you’d like to watch.”

“Everyone says you’re a natural. I’m sure you will be fine.” Adam replied and Nigel could tell it was partly to convince himself.
Nigel chuckled. “Everyone huh?”

“You and Lynnette, and you say the Carlos says so.”

Nigel smiled. “Must be true then.”

*

Adam was excited to get the flight. The month had gone so quickly and he had packed and repacked several times even though they were only going for three nights. Now that they were at the airport he was a little more nervous.

“Gate’s open.” Nigel told him, pulling him out of his thoughts. He remained still for a moment and then whimpered. He was relieved when Nigel reacted immediately and pulled him tight to him, his face straight to Nigel’s neck where he could scent him. Adam sighed his relief and let himself melt into Nigel, who continued to hold him tight until he felt ok to pull back again.

“You ok gorgeous?” Nigel asked. Adam could feel the concern through their bond and connected it with Nigel’s subtle facial expression.

“It’s… a lot.” Adam sighed. Nigel nodded. They had talked about it before. When Adam had moved to California the trip had been hard but he had managed to hold it together. When he had made it to the hotel it was only Nigel’s scent on his clothes in the bags they had accidently swapped, that kept him calm enough to get through it. He had told Nigel all about it, but he wasn’t sure how he would feel about making the trip again. Now they were at the airport he was overwhelmed by the bustle and concerned about being trapped on a plane with so many strangers. At least he had Nigel’s scent again, and more importantly, Nigel.

Nigel pulled him close and began to walk them to their gate.

“It’ll be ok darling. When we get on the plane you can put on your headphones and eye mask and cuddle up to me and we will be there in no time. Then you get to see Harlan, which you’re looking forward to.” Nigel’s words soothed him almost as much as the calming scent and the feeling of calm that radiated from his mate through their bond. And he was excited about seeing Harlan, and showing Nigel around New York. They had chosen to stay in a hotel fairly central so they could explore the city and not impose on anyone even though Harlan had offered a spare room. Nigel had insisted even though Adam said he didn’t mind staying with Harlan.

Adam focused on seeing Harlan, tucking himself further into his alpha’s embrace and occasionally nuzzling into his neck, enjoying both the scent and the feel of his coarse beard - it felt reassuringly like home.

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Once finally seated, the flight had been fine. Adam had put on his headphones and ended up watching some space show on his tablet, whilst snuggled up against Nigel. Nigel felt himself drifting off now and then, but would shake himself awake - wanting to make sure he was available if his omega needed him.

Getting off the plane had brought back some stress, Nigel kept them in their seats until the plane was pretty much cleared so that Adam didn’t have to deal with all the people. It meant that there were slightly less people when they got to baggage claim too, and the arrivals lounge where they were to meet Harlan.

Nigel took a deep breath, taking his turn to find a little bit of calm in the scent of his mate. He could only imagine what Harlan thought of him, and that would just be based on Adam’s information. He knew Adam wouldn’t have said anything that would have intentionally cast Nigel in a bad light - but all he had to do was tell the truth. If there was one thing about Adam, he was brutally honest whether he realised it or not. He knew he hadn’t told Harlan

until after they were bonded, which must have been a bit of a shock for his friend - in his shoes Nigel would be wary. Anything Adam could've said would have only made it worse - undoubtedly revealing some of the bad along with the good. He couldn't help but be nervous about meeting someone who was probably going to take one look at him and try to convince Adam of his mistake.

"Are you smelling me Nigel?" Adam asked, a small smile pulling at his lips.

Nigel just grunted and pulled himself upright, clearing his throat and puffing out his chest. Why the fuck should he be nervous? If this guy didn't like him, so fucking what? Adam was his mate, the love of his fucking life. If this guy didn't like it then he could piss off. He tried to keep this in his mind but deep down knew what it would mean to Adam for them to get along. He would do everything he possibly could to get this guy to like him, for Adam's sake.

"Harlan!" Adam's exclamation had Nigel searching the now emptying arrivals lounge. He saw the guy who must be Harlan, he was heading over with a bright smile for Adam. Adam dropped his luggage and moved at a quicker pace towards his friend. Nigel wanted to give them a minute, so he picked up the discarded luggage and made his way over at a slower pace, getting to them just as Harlan released Adam from an embrace. Adam had hugged the man easily and Harlan looked a little surprised - Nigel knew Adam hadn't been as comfortable with physical contact before they met. Omegas craved touch but Adam's autism had been an obstacle to that - Nigel was glad he'd brought that side of Adam out.

As Nigel arrived behind Adam, Harlan's eyes flicked to him and his face dropped. Nigel hoped Adam hadn't picked up on it, for his part he kept a smile firmly on his face and put out his hand.

"Nice to finally meet you Harlan." He said.

Harlan hesitated before taking his hand and firmly shaking it. His eyes looked Nigel over quickly, reminding Nigel that Harlan had once been in the army. His eyes took in the remains of a bruise on his cheekbone from his last session at the gym, the tattoo on his neck - everything. Nigel could tell - absolutely everything was assessed - his age, his look, the whole of his outer self. Even Nigel couldn't deny his outer self was not an unreasonable reflection of his inner self, with one exception - his life with Adam.

"Nigel." Harlan acknowledged with a polite nod as he released Nigel's hand. Adam took it as a good sign and smiled widely at Nigel - a look that said Adam knew they would get along just fine, unaware of the more subtle aspects of the exchange.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Adam and Nigel have dinner with Harlan... goes about as well as you might expect...

Nigel was glad they had booked into a hotel. The ride over to the hotel that Harlan had kindly given them was beyond uncomfortable. Adam hadn't noticed, busy filling Harlan in on things about work and California in general, barely pausing for breath. But Nigel noticed the tighter grip on the wheel every time his name was mentioned; the occasional side on glance; the general feeling of tension.

Once at the hotel they had arranged to go to Harlan's for dinner later that evening. Harlan had seemed surprised that Adam had been happy to check into a hotel rather than stay somewhere familiar like Harlan's place. And Nigel wasn't above noticing the way Harlan asked about it - Adam not picking up the subtle questioning as to whether Nigel was forcing Adam to stay in a hotel, when he might prefer to stay with his friend. Adam had rambled on about how he chose the hotel because it was so close to some of the sights he wanted to show Nigel. Nigel was glad Adam unknowingly stood up for him, pulling Adam to him and kissing his curls as Harlan narrowed his eyes.

Once they were in their room Nigel flopped onto the bed with a heavy sigh.

"Are you tired?" Adam asked. "I'm a little tired from the flight. It's been a long day." Adam climbed onto the bed and curled up against Nigel.

"Maybe we should have a nap before we need to get ready for dinner." Nigel pressed a kiss to Adam's forehead.

Adam nodded, his eyes already closed. Nigel lay staring at the ceiling, thinking this was going to be the longest few days of his fucking life.

*

Adam was excited as the taxi pulled up to Harlan's place. He had noticed through Nigel's silence and the subtle tug of anxiety he felt through their bond, that Nigel seemed nervous about the evening. It felt strange to be on the receiving end of the anxiety and as Nigel leaned foward to pay the driver, Adam placed a hand on the base of Nigel's back and rubbed soothingly as Nigel often did for him. Nigel turned and smiled at him before opening the door.

Adam wasn't sure why Nigel was so nervous, he knew Harlan would get on really well with Nigel, in fact they had several things in common which Adam would point out at the first

chance.

He hadn't been to Harlan's for a long time but it was comforting to see it hadn't changed at all really, and it smelt really good - Harlan had made macaroni cheese.

Harlan welcomed them with a smile and ushered them in and straight to the table and offering them drinks.

Nigel accepted a beer and Adam asked for a soda. He didn't care much for alcohol - the one time he and Nigel had got drunk together he had felt sick after. Nigel had been so sweet and caring taking care of him, but he didn't enjoy it at all. It had been fine at first and then he felt all dizzy and out of control and Nigel told him he should probably not drink any more, but Adam felt like he should because everyone else at dinner was drinking - it was one of the few times Angela frowned at him when she agreed he should not have more. But two more glasses later and he was sick. And then sick again. After their friends left, rather quickly, he had groaned to Nigel that he didn't feel so good and Nigel had been right there - a wet towel to his head as he found himself unable to leave the bathroom for the next few hours. He'd finally passed out and then woke hours later in bed with Nigel sat in the armchair he pulled next to the bed, holding his hand. His heart swelled with love for Nigel before he threw up again.

"Dinner smells great." Nigel told Harlan, though his voice sounded a bit raspy, like when he first woke in the morning - as though his vocal cords were out of practice. Adam was also a little surprised as he knew Nigel didn't really like macaroni cheese all that much. He studied Nigel's face as his alpha turned his smile to him and decided he was being polite. Nigel had said that was something people should do sometimes even if they didn't like something. Adam smiled back and gave a small sigh when Nigel moved his chair closer and his hand came to rest on Adam's thigh under the table. It made him feel a huge sense of calm as he looked at his handsome alpha. He had combed his hair back, trimmed his beard and was wearing a smart shirt - Adam knew he had wanted to make a good impression on Harlan.

Harlan brought the plates out and frowned. Adam wasn't quite sure why, but then could sense Nigel's interpretation of the expression as his alpha scooted his chair away so that they were no longer sitting close at the table. He felt the loss of Nigel's hand on his thigh and stifled a whimper. Had they been anywhere other than with one of his friends he might have let the whimper out. Adam busied himself with looking down at his plate, trying to ignore the strange situation - he couldn't quite work out what was going on, but having dinner with Lynnette and Angela was never like this. He felt a little uncomfortable but tried to hide it.

Harlan sat down the other side of Adam and they started eating. Adam smiled over at Nigel, who he could see was being very careful to eat nicely and not talk with his mouth full. Nigel gave him a reassuring smile which warmed him in his chest and belly and made things a little easier for a moment.

"So, Nigel. What is it you do?"

Nigel swallowed and took a sip of his beer before replying. "I work in security."

“He’s also a boxer.” Adam offered. He was sure the weird silence despite the people talking was one of those awkward social situation he had never really realised existed until he Beth had started to try and explain them to him, and until being with Nigel made him understand them more.

“Amateur boxing. I have a fight while we’re here… tomorrow… if you want to come along…”

“Harlan used to box in the army.” Adam offered up again. “He should come.” He agreed with Nigel and then turned to Harlan “You should come. It would be nice to have someone sit with me.” Adam smiled.

“You’re taking Adam?” Harlan directed his question at Nigel. Adam could see another frown and sensed a wave of frustrated anger from Nigel. He wanted to move closer, but Nigel had moved away before so he settled with leaning over and putting his hand on top of Nigel’s.

“I want to go.” Adam replied before Nigel could speak.

“It’s messy Adam, people get hurt and it’s noisy and…” Harlan now looked at Adam with concern but his tone seemed angry.”

“He knows.” Nigel replied. “I’ve told him. But he wants to make sure I’m ok.” Nigel smiled at Adam and turned his hand over to squeeze the omega’s into his palm.

“I know.” Adam confirmed with a nod. “But I think it will be ok. No one really gets hurt because they agree to do it, so it’s ok, it’s not bad. They all know what they are doing.” Adam smiled at Nigel.

“Adam, that may be true when someone comes home with a few bruises and scrapes, but seeing it is different. It’s violent…” Harlan’s words trailed off.

“He knows, I’ve explained.” Nigel responded, squeezing Adam’s hand tighter. Adam nodded in agreement.

“I know. I want Nigel to take me there, so I can make sure he is ok and bring band aids and things like that.”

Harlan shook his head with a heavy sigh and shot a look at Nigel which Adam noticed but didn’t quite understand.

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Nigel was glad that the conversation had turned to Adam’s job and Adam took over explaining in serious detail everything he’d been doing in the months since he had left New York. Harlan gave appreciative nods and smiles. Some of which seemed genuine - he was impressed with how Adam was doing. Others were patronising sounds and smiles - the man clearly had a habit of falling back on treating Adam like a child - Nigel was glad Adam didn’t appear to pick up on those, but he couldn’t help but be ruffled on his omega’s behalf.

Nigel excused himself to the bathroom and when he returned Harlan looked up at him over Adam with the expression of someone caught in the act. With no filter or stop button, Adam continued to talk as Nigel resumed his seat, and it was clear Harlan had been asking about their relationship - how they met, what had happened since, being bonded.

Nigel sat back and listened gleefully as Adam continued to tell Harlan much more than the beta had any wish to know, his look often turning to one of discomfort. Finally Adam reached the present day - they were bonded and happy and spent lots of time with their friends, and Adam was really happy. Harlan pulled on a smile for Adam.

There was a little more small talk before Adam disappeared to the bathroom. Nigel prepared himself for a long silence or awkward conversation. He was surprised quite how awkward it was.

“Is this a green card thing?” Harlan asked as soon as Adam left the room. His face was hard and angry. If Nigel wasn’t so fucking pissed off at the question he might have even appreciated the fact that Harlan was just being protective over Adam.

“What the fuck? No.”

“Well, it just seems a little convenient. Bonding is an automatic green card - they can’t kick you out of the country now, so that’s as convenient as it comes.” Harlan’s face reddened with anger.

“I’m going to give you the benefit of being a fucking beta and having no fucking idea how these things work, and forget that you just said that.” Nigel felt every muscle straining in his effort not to hit the man. He was right, bonded omegas and alphas had automatic rights, but if Harlan was either he would know that there was a reason for those rights - bonding was for life, to pull apart a bonded couple was cruel and unusual and beyond any country’s laws. Being apart could result in anything from madness to death and that was something no government was going to be responsible for. It was why no one bonded without a great deal of consideration. Something a fucking beta would never understand.

“I get it, I’m not the alpha you imagined for Adam. Let’s be fucking honest, you and his dad didn’t imagine any alpha for him - you’d have been happier if he’d gone through life unfulfilled and never really knowing what it was to be truly loved in a way only an alpha can love him…”

Harlan cut him off with a fist slammed on the table. “Adam’s special. He needs…”

“He’s not a fucking child.” Nigel raised both his voice and body, now standing over the beta who rose to meet him. “I’m his alpha, I know what he needs…”

Nigel trailed off as his nose peaked at the scent behind him. Scared omega. He turned and saw Adam in the doorway close to tears.

“Nigel?” He whimpered. Nigel was at his side in a second and pulled him into his arms.

“It’s ok darling. I’m here. I’ve got you.” He picked Adam up and carried him back to the table, taking his seat and cradling Adam in his lap - the omega’s face squished into his neck as he stroked a hand through his curls. For a minute he ignored Harlan as he tended to his beautiful omega. A hand rubbing gentle circles in Adam’s trembling back as he muttered words of love in Romanian into Adam’s hair. Since they had bonded Adam wasn’t really scared of him anymore, but there had been times like this when he was scared and upset by the situation. He was angry at himself and Harlan - he couldn’t fucking imagine how Adam must have felt seeing his alpha and his oldest friend argue so heatedly. Nigel shot an angry glance at Harlan who now stood adrift at the edge of the table, clearly unsure of what to say or do.

“I’m going to take Adam back to the hotel now, it’s been a long day.” He told Harlan as he got to his feet. “That ok gorgeous?” Adam had stopped trembling and now nodded. He set Adam down, still holding him tight, his head buried in Nigel’s chest. The calm that was coming back to Adam looped through their bond and Nigel felt his anger draining off a little. Even so it was through almost gritted teeth that he spoke again “thanks for dinner Harlan, it was really lovely.”

At his words Adam perked up and gave a sniffle before pulling his head back from Nigel and looking at Harlan.

“It was really nice.” He agreed through a watery smile.

Nigel smiled down at him and gave his back a gentle rub. “Maybe Harlan will come along tomorrow and then you can catch up more.” Adam nodded in response. Nigel turned to Harlan trying to keep the calm he had found through Adam. “I’ll text you the details and get your name added on the door.” He told Harlan. “I hope you can make it along.”

Nigel released Adam as long as was needed for them to get into their jackets, and then pulled him back into the crook of his arm before they said pleasant goodbyes to Harlan and headed off into the night.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Adam watches Nigel's boxing match and gets drunk...

“Harlan says he will come along tonight.” Adam smiled at him.

Nigel had woken up in the hotel bed, sprawled on his back with Adam straddled over him. Nigel rubbed a rough hand over his face before wrapping his arms up around Adam. “That’s great gorgeous!”

He meant it. He had hoped that the first fight Adam would have chance to go to would be in California and Lynnette and Angela could tag along and be there for him, but schedules hadn’t worked out. He looked up at the beautiful blue eyes dancing in front of him and felt a pang of guilt and worry. He had tried to convince Adam several times that he shouldn’t come to the fight, any of them, but least of all this one - so far from the support of their friends.

“Darling, are you sure you want to come to the fight? I really don’t think you’re going to like it…”

Adam cut him off with a kiss, then giggled as he sat back. “It will be fine Nigel. You’re my alpha, I should be there to support you.”

“But, it will be violent and…” Adam cut him off again, another kiss.

“You already told me all of this and I already made up my mind. Harlan will be there, it will all be fine.”

*

Nigel was nervous most of the day. He had spent a few hours in the hotel gym warming up, whilst Adam watched him. He’d told his sweet omega he could go off and do other things, but Adam seemed intent on watching him. His open expression didn’t seem to betray any worry - he seemed quite entertained by watching Nigel sweat. Nigel didn’t miss the occasional moments where Adam’s tongue ran over his lips unknowingly, or he adjusted his trousers. It made Nigel smile even if for a moment - little minx. He wished he could take Adam back up to the room and work up a sweat together, but he needed to get in some last minute preparation. He’d been training hard for this fight and he wanted to win. It wasn’t even alpha ego, he wasn’t trying to impress Adam - he just wanted to take as little punishment as possible so his little spaceman wasn’t too upset by what was happening.

The day seemed to pass too quickly. Soon they were in a taxi to the fight venue. It was too early for the audience to be let in but Adam had called Harlan and they had agreed to meet

outside so they could go get dinner before the doors opened whilst Nigel got himself ready for the fight.

As promised, Harlan was stood outside waiting for them. Adam wore a big smile for him and Harlan returned it, sparing only a quick glance at Nigel. They all greeted each other politely.

“Look Nigel.” Adam said with a smile, his eye had been caught by the poster for the event that had his name down along with all the other fighters - the font sizes dictating their worth on the bill - Nigel wasn’t even sure how Adam had been able to see his tiny name.

“I’m going to take a picture to show Lynnette.” Adam told them happily and pulled out his phone before heading over to the poster, leaving Nigel and Harlan alone.

Nigel bit his lower lip for a moment, considering the words he’d had in his head all day, before finally speaking in hushed tones to Harlan.

“I know we have our differences, but I really need you to look out for Adam tonight. I’ve tried to convince him not to come along, and I had hoped that our friends would be with him if he came to a fight. But this is what it is. You know how he can be and I’ve tried to explain, but he… He needs someone to be there…”

Harlan was nodding. “I get it. And I appreciate your looking out for him like this…”

“He’s my omega.” Nigel managed to curb the growl that crept along with the words. Harlan held up his hand with a nod. There was a moment of silence between them, Nigel reminding himself that Harlan cared for Adam no matter what. Nigel ran a hand through his hair and looked over at Adam who was now taking a close up photo just of Nigel’s name.

“I’m on in the third fight, each fight will be announced in the venue bar, so can you keep him there? Just stay in the bar until my fight?” Nigel asked, wanting to keep this as painless as possible for Adam. “Take him in for the fight and then take him straight back to the hotel, I’m going to leave and get back there as soon as I can after the fight.” Nigel took the tickets out of his pocket and handed them to Harlan. “These are the comp tickets I got, they should be quite far back, I didn’t want Adam too close to the fight. If he… well, take him out of the fight if you need to, y’know?”

Harlan nodded his agreement. Nigel mustered a smile and held out his hand, which Harlan shook. Adam came back to them smiling.

“I knew you would like each other.”

Nigel pulled him into his arms and pressed a kiss into Adam’s curls. He leaned down into Adam’s neck and scented his little omega, feeling the calm of his scent and a tug of love through their bond. Adam started to giggle and squirm.

“Nigel, you’re crushing me.” He laughed.

Nigel realised how tightly he was wrapped around Adam and slowly released him, taking in one last deep breath to prepare himself for the evening ahead.

*

Adam rocked slightly in the booth whilst he waited for Harlan to return from the bar. He was nervous about the fight, he didn't want Nigel to get hurt but he understood what might happen. He hadn't told Nigel but he had watched a couple of fights online to try and better understand boxing. He hadn't liked them, they had been violent and he knew it would be even worse in person, but he really wanted to support Nigel. He was really proud of how well Nigel was doing with the boxing and wanted to demonstrate that. Actions spoke louder than words people said, Adam sort of understood that's what this was.

Harlan arrived at the table with two beers.
"That's not soda." Adam frowned at the bottle placed in front of him.

"Adam, trust me, you're going to prefer the beer to the soda. It will help you relax and make everything a lot more… calm." Harlan told him, taking a swig of his own bottle.

Adam frowned but nodded, he kind of understood what Harlan was trying to say, but he would have appreciated if it was a little more direct. He took a sip from his bottle and wrinkled his nose at the taste.

"Nigel likes beer." Adam commented. "I think I prefer soda, but this is ok. I think you and Nigel would be good friends." He continued, rolling the bottle in his hands. "You both like beer, and boxing and me." Adam smiled. Harlan returned the smile with a curt nod.

Harlan had had two beers by the time Adam finished one. Even so, Adam was feeling light and tingly. He giggled as the sensation was funny.

His tongue felt heavy and silence had fallen again after Harlan had finished telling him about how his job was going. Adam looked at the slightly fuzzy image of his friend.

"Harlan, why did you and dad tell me alphas are bad? Nigel isn't bad…" Adam asked with genuine interest.

Harlan coughed on his mouthful of beer and set his bottle down.

"Adam, we were worried about you. There are some bad alphas out there and we were worried that one might take advantage of you… This thing with Nigel… it's all happened really fast."

"Nigel hasn't taken advantage of me. I, um.. I know how it looks. I'm not stupid. He's big and scary and he seems like he's bad, but really he isn't. He looks after me and he loves me. He… um… he took care of me when I needed an alpha and he would do anything for me. That isn't a bad alpha." Adam said with a frown.

"I guess not. I guess he must be a good guy. I just… with your dad gone, I worry. But if he's taking care of you good…"

"Harlan." Adam said firmly, though he swayed a little as he said it. "He's my alpha, he's my mate. Nigel tried to explain to me… you might not understand because you are a beta and

you never get to have this kind of connection. He's… We're everything to each other because we're mated and nothing will ever change that." Adam frowned, considering his words. "I hope you can be friends because you both mean a lot to me."

Harlan nodded and smiled. "We'll get there."

Harlan bought them both another beer before they left the bar and went through to their seats. They were quite far back but Adam could still see fairly well. He was sort of glad not to be closer, it was very loud and crowded further to the front.
Harlan cheered when the fight was announced so Adam did the same, very excited to hear Nigel's name being mentioned by the commentator. After their stats were called out and the bell rang, Adam moved to the edge of his chair. He was rubbing his thighs in an action of comfort as the fight started. He barely registered Harlan's hand at the base of his back, just resting there in a comforting gesture.

Nigel was slower than his opponent, taking a couple of hits to the torso. But he was more powerful, his own punches have a clear effect on the other fighter. The rounds rolled on, Adam rocking back and forth in the chair as he watched his alpha take hits. He gave as good as he got and his opponent was clearly tiring and slowing down though Nigel's punches were not becoming any less consistent in their force.

Adam froze as Nigel took a hit to the jaw that threw him against the ropes. The audience let out a collective noise in reaction, whereas Adam let out a whimper. He stood up, wanting to go to Nigel, then sat back down not really knowing what he was doing. He fidgeted nervously in his seat, not even feeling Harlan's hand on his back as he tried to gentle him.

Nigel pulled upright and wiped the blood from his mouth. The next few minutes were a frenzy, both fighters laying into each other as they knew the end was drawing close. The opponent was too slow now, and despite sneaking in the occasional good hit, he was taking a pounding from Nigel. The crowd was cheering, many on their feet as the fight escalated. Adam couldn't see through the people and didn't stand himself, instead the noise drove his hands to his ears and he couldn't fight the tears in his eyes. Each noise from the audience had him flinching as his mind reeled through all the potentials he couldn't see. He imagined Nigel covered in blood and badly hurt.

"Adam, it's ok." Harlan had to shout over the noise of the crowd as he squeezed Adam's shoulder. "We can go, Nigel will see us at the hotel…" he started.

Adam could barely register the words. Another cheer had him on his feet, pulling away from Harlan.

"Nigel." He breathed, panic rising. He tried to see over the crowd but could barely see the ring, the two figures a blur through the tears in his eyes. He wrung his hands and shuffled from foot to foot. One of the fighters went down. "Nigel." he screamed the word out and ran.

He didn't notice the eyes following him as he stumbled down the bleachers towards the ring. As he got closer the figures came into focus. A bell was rung - one man down, the other having his fist held up by the commentator. Adam was scaling the side of the ring before he realised which was which - that Nigel was the man standing. He wasn't sure what his

intentions had been, other than to be with his alpha. The audience were muttering and laughing at the sight before them, breaking into a collective sound of adoration when Nigel met Adam at the side of the ring and pulled him up into his arms. Adam wrapped his arms and legs around Nigel and breathed in the scent of his alpha, beneath the sweat and blood.

“It’s ok darling.” Nigel’s voice broke through his fear and panic. Adam whimpered and nuzzled into Nigel’s neck.

“Sor...sorry.” Adam muttered as Nigel made his way to the side of the ring and lowered Adam down, following him out to cheers of the crowd who seemed endeared by the display of alpha/omega affection in front of them. Harlan was there waiting with a smile as the commentator announced Nigel the winner once more to the cheer of the crowd.

“Great fight.” Harlan smiled, offering Nigel his hand, which Nigel shook with a grin. Since getting out of the ring, Adam had been crushed to Nigel’s side like a limpet but now Nigel stopped and looked down at him.

“Angel, I have to go and get cleaned up. Will you go with Harlan and I will see you at the hotel?” Nigel spoke gently.

Adam nodded and yet his hands continued to grip onto Nigel, his fingers digging into Nigel’s bare flesh.

“Time for us to go Adam.” Harlan coaxed. Adam could feel Harlan pulling him away from Nigel and despite an automatic and immediate resistance, he slowly let his grip go and went with Harlan. Now held firm with Harlan’s arm around his shoulders, Adam smiled weakly up at Nigel.

“I’m sorry. I was worried…” Adam said shyly, a blush creeping up. Nigel grinned and leaned down to kiss his omega before they parted company.

*

Nigel had been worried about the reaction the little scene might have caused, but back in the changing room the promoter seemed really amused by the whole thing. Many of their fighters were unmated alphas - grunting thugs - so to have such a scene went over really well with the audience.

“This isn’t wrestling.” The promoter had told him. “We don’t have that soap opera quality, but that doesn’t mean the audience doesn’t appreciate it now and then, brings a bit of colour to it all.”

Nigel had let the medic in the changing room take care of his cuts, a few stitches along a cheek bone, a slight split in his lip. Other than that he was mostly bruises, but it was weirdly satisfying - evidence of a fight won. He grinned all the way from the changing room back to the hotel.

Harlan was waiting for him when he entered the room, sitting at the small table with a cup of coffee. Adam’s little form could be seen curled up in the bed breathing softly. Harlan held up

a finger to his lips as Nigel entered the room, rising and going to the door to intercept him.

“He’s snoozing now.” Harlan all but whispered. “He was a little stressed when we got back here, but he curled up with one of your shirts and fell off to sleep a little while ago. I didn’t want to leave him in case he woke up before you got back.”

Nigel put a hand on Harlan’s shoulder and gave a genuine smile. “Thanks Harlan, I can’t thank you enough…”

Harlan shook his head. “No need to thank me. That kid is the closest thing I have to family. You just take care of him… I know you will.” Harlan smiled and grabbed his coat before heading out the door.

Nigel closed it quietly behind the man with a smile. That seemed promising.

He had cleaned up in the changing rooms but he had another quick shower to try and take the ache out of his bones. His hair still a little wet as he tried to sneak under the covers without waking Adam. He realised he’d failed miserably when Adam bolted upright in the bed. He looked down at Nigel and grinned, all teeth.

“You’re here.” Adam said, his speech a little slurred and his eyes unfocused.

Nigel sat up against the headboard and dragged Adam into his arms. “Yeah gorgeous.” He drew in a deep breath and let out a low laugh. “My sweet little omega, are you drunk?”

Adam pulled back and looked at him, his eyes drifting around. “Harlan said beer would be good… for being calm.” Adam told him, managing to suppress a hiccup part way through.

Nigel let out a laugh and moved Adam into his lap, where the omega swayed a little.

“Nigel, you are so hurt.” Adam frowned, his eyes a little glassy. He reached a hand up, as though to touch Nigel’s face but he hiccupped and fell forward, ending up poking Nigel in the eye.

“Damn.” Nigel cursed, surprised when this made Adam break into a giggle.

“Oh no. I’m sorry.” He did look a little remorseful but then he started laughing again. “Nigel, Nigel… If I beat you, does that mean I won the fight earlier too? If you beat the man earlier then I beat you, I would be the champion.” Adam rocked back in laughter, Nigel catching him before he could completely fall back into the bed.

“I guess so.” Nigel laughed.

Adam’s tongue peaked out the side of his mouth as he tried to focus on Nigel, now leaning in. His hands came up to Nigel’s face, taking hold either side. “I know your weaknesses, I can beat you.” He told Nigel, the laughter at the end dissolving any perceived menace there might have been. Nigel laughed in return.

Nigel grinned as Adam moved, his over exaggerated drunken movements giving away his intentions. He was right, he knew Nigel’s weakness, Nigel was weak at the knees already

thinking about Adam's warm mouth on his cock. The thought distracted Nigel long enough for him to lose hold of Adam, who promptly fell off the side of the bed, hitting the floor with a thud.

"Fuck. Adam, you ok?" Nigel scrambled from the bed, at least reassured by Adam's drunken giggle. Nigel got down on the floor next to Adam, a hand in his omega's curls as those blue eyes looked up at him tenderly. Nigel started to lean in for a kiss but found a hand pressed hard to his chest. Adam's face was frozen and suddenly very pale.

"Nigel… I'm going to be sick…"

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Starts with a hangover and ends with an overwhelming "date" night

Nigel was so fucking tired. Already knackered from the fight, he had spent a good portion of the night holding Adam as he threw up the entire contents of his stomach, and then some, into the toilet. He then spent a whole lot more of the night holding onto Adam in the bed as he shivered and sobbed - the omega was not dealing well with the effects of being drunk.

Adam was clingy all the next morning, still feeling sick and initially not letting Nigel out of bed until Nigel insisted that Adam needed a glass of water at the least.

“I’m sorry…” Adam muttered, barely audible from under the covers as Nigel returned with water. Nigel sighed and chuckled, putting down the water before climbing back into the bed to join Adam in the cocoon of bedding.

“That’s ok gorgeous, I can’t always handle my drink either.” Nigel ran his hand into Adam’s curls. Of course, Nigel’s limit was way past the three beers that appeared to be Adam’s limit.

Adam whimpered and pressed himself closer to Nigel until the alpha pulled his arms around the clammy little body.

“But... I should be looking after you!” Adam whispered into Nigel’s neck, where he had pressed his face. “You are all cut and bruised and achey and I wanted to be there and support you.”

“You did darling, you were a great fucking support. I couldn’t have won that fight if I hadn’t been thinking about you - knowing you were there cheering me on.”

“I didn’t see it all… I’m sorry.” Adam admitted.

Nigel was actually really pleased to hear it. He’d have loved nothing better than to know that Adam had hidden his face in his hands the whole fight. He wasn’t lying that Adam being there to support him had meant a lot to him, but he was not upset that the omega wasn’t exposed to his violent side even in the controlled environment.

He pressed a kiss to Adam’s temple. “You didn’t need to baby. Just a couple of fucking thugs beating each other up.” He chuckled.

“I’m sorry if I embarrassed you when I… I just wanted to make sure you were ok, I didn’t know who won… I wanted to make sure...” Adam’s words were choked out. His little hungover omega full of confusion and regret.

Nigel laughed and pulled Adam tighter. “You didn’t. The promoter loved it, the audience ate it up. Even if they had hated it I still wouldn’t have been embarrassed… I could never be embarrassed of you.”

Adam snuffled happily. Within moments there was nothing but the soft noise of his gentle snoring as Nigel held him close.

*

The day was wasted really, not that Nigel seemed to mind but Adam felt a little bad. They’d had lots of plans, Nigel had never been to New York before and they only had one day left after this.

Adam had spent the entire morning still feeling really unwell, but had nothing left in him to throw up, which was almost worse. Nigel had made him eat some toast at lunchtime and that had been ok even though he had argued at first that he wouldn’t be able to keep it down. Even the thought of his usual mac and cheese made him feel queasy. Nigel had known best, but Nigel had been drunk lots before, his alpha had reassured him.

They didn’t open the curtains until the afternoon, thankfully the sun wasn’t too bright, and Nigel had held Adam in bed all day just making sure he was ok. Except the times when Adam couldn’t bare to be touched and Nigel backed off. It was odd, it wasn’t like how he normally didn’t like to be touched, which was something in his head, it was instead because his skin felt so sore. He’d only felt this way before when he had the flu as a child. This was worse than last time he got drunk. Everything hurt. In the end, Nigel had suggested a bath.

“It will help you feel better darling, it will blow out the cobwebs and help you feel clean and comfortable.”

Adam had groaned at first. He did feel sort of icky but the thought of trying to leave the bed was a little bit too much, and he was sure there weren’t any cobwebs on him anyway no matter what Nigel said.

Adam must have started to snooze again because he didn’t realise Nigel had gone to run a bath until the alpha had lifted him from the bed and taken him to the bathroom. Unable to bare the feel of clothes against his tender skin, Adam was already naked. Nigel was too, Adam realised once they got to the tub, his alpha stepping in and sank down into the water with Adam in his arms.

Adam could barely keep his eyes open as Nigel sat him between his legs, his back led against the alpha’s chest, and started to lather him up. He found he no longer minded so much that Nigel was touching his sensitive skin, as strong hands ran soap suds all over him. He started to finally feel a little more himself when Nigel’s hands went up into his hair, lathering it up with shampoo. He could feel Nigel sculpting his hair into a peak with the suds, which made him smile. His eyes finally opened all the way when he felt the suds on his chin. He frowned and turned to look at Nigel once he realised what was happening.

Nigel broke into a deep chuckle once they were facing each other, which only deepened Adam’s frown as his hands went up to his chin. But then he too had to laugh when he realised

what a large beard Nigel had sculpted on his face from the suds. He took it in his hands and moved the suds to Nigel's face, covering his actual beard.

"You're going really white now, like an old man." Adam giggled.

Nigel raised an eyebrow and wiped the suds from his chin. "You want me to prove I'm not an old man?" His tone and face were stern but Adam could feel through their bond that he thought it was funny. Adam laughed and Nigel grabbed him up and nuzzled into his neck, the water sloshing over the sides of the tub. He held him there for a few minutes, both lost in the calm of each other.

When Nigel's arms started to slacken, Adam pulled free and picked up the shower gel. He squirted some into his hands and moved so he was straddling his alpha's legs, facing him. He started to soap over Nigel's tight shoulders and down his chest, smiling as his fingers played through the coarse hair. Nigel relaxed back and let out a sigh. Even so his muscles were still tight and his body tense.

"Are you ok Nigel? Does it hurt?" Adam asked, taking extra care to be gentle over the now purpling bruises on Nigel's torso.

"It's ok baby, just achey. Nothing a few more baths and some good night's sleep won't fix." Nigel smiled sleepily and then ended with a yawn.

"I… I'm sorry you had to stay up with me. I don't think I'll get drunk again." Adam felt the heat rise in his cheeks and he looked down, not wanting to face his alpha.

Nigel cupped Adam's chin and brought his face up so their eyes met. "Darling, there is nothing I'd rather do than stay up all night with you, whether you're drunk or stargazing or we're having mindblowing sex."

Adam felt his cheeks burning red but Nigel didn't let him avert his eyes, instead dragging him into a kiss. Adam felt like he was melting and let out a happy sigh. He still felt bad that they had lost a day because of him.

"I'm sorry we wasted a day because of me…" Adam finally was able to mutter as Nigel released him. Nigel's response was to growl and immediately pull him back to his chest, caging him in strong arms.

"Adam, stop. Today has been perfect because I got to spend it with you. And I got to spend it in bed without you nagging me to go sightseeing whilst I felt like absolute fucking shit because you felt just as shit as I did. We can see New York any time, but there's not much I give a shit about seeing more than I care about having a bath with you." He nipped playfully at Adam's earlobe which made the omega laugh.

"Ok." He smiled, feeling a bit better.

Nigel let him go again and Adam ran his hands up into Nigel's hair.

“I’m feeling a lot better so… um, we can do something tonight if you like. Is there anything you want to do?”

Nigel smiled. “Anything you like gorgeous. Take me on a date.” He grinned.

*

Nigel wasn’t surprised by anything Adam did these days. Not only was he fairly predictable to him now he knew him better, but even more so since they bonded. He knew Adam wasn’t going to take him to dinner or a club, he was surprised Adam didn’t know of some 24 hour space museum or something. Instead they were in Central Park in the dark, watching racoons.

“This is what Beth is writing her book about.” Adam told him as they huddled together on a bench, takeaway cups in their hands - Adam’s was hot chocolate where Nigel had opted for a strong coffee. “I’m still not sure I quite understand why she is writing about talking racoons…” he paused for a moment. “Racoons don’t talk.” He reassured Nigel, to which Nigel found himself nodding in agreement.

“You brought Beth here?” Nigel asked over his coffee.

“Yeah. I used to come here all the time and I liked her and wanted to share it with her.” Adam nodded before taking a sip. Nigel knew if anyone else had said this to him he would have been hurt, but instead he was charmed by Adam’s utter truthfulness. Nigel was thinking this when Adam leaned over and kissed his cheek. “That’s why I wanted to bring you here, to share it with you because I love you. This place meant a lot to me and sometimes I miss it, and now we can miss it together because when we talk about it you will know where I mean.”

Nigel felt his heart swell. He pulled Adam tighter to him and buried his face in the omega’s soft curls.

“I fucking love you.” Nigel muttered into his hair.

*

It felt like Adam had walked them all over New York by the time they ended up outside a block of well appointed apartments and Adam came to a halt.

“You ok baby?” Nigel asked, concerned by the look on his omega’s face.

“It’s ok. I can’t go in, but it’s ok. Someone else is there now so I can’t go in, but that’s ok.” Adam was mumbling.

“Oh.” Nigel realised they were outside Adam’s old apartment. He still owned it, renting it out to cover the mortgage. He couldn't imagine how it must feel for Adam to not be able to visit his old family home even if he did still own it.

“I wanted to see, but I think I was wrong.” He turned tearfully to Nigel and snuggled into his side.

“It’s ok gorgeous. I bet they’re taking really good care of the place.” Nigel told him, pulling Adam into him so that the omega’s face was pressed to his neck. Adam breathed in Nigel’s scent and Nigel felt him relax a little. “Come on, are you hungry? We can get room service at the hotel.” Nigel turned them and started to walk but Adam froze.

“Adam? Oh my god, Adam how are you?” The dark haired beta woman had been walking towards the building but had stopped when she saw them.

“Beth. Hi.” Adam struggled the words out. Nigel knew that Adam had parted on reasonable terms with Beth in the end, it wasn’t so much seeing her as it was being unprepared to see her, especially after an already difficult day or so.

Beth came to a stop in front of them, looking from Adam to Nigel with wide eyes and a wide smile. “Hi. I’m Beth.” She held out her hand for Nigel to shake.

After a negligible pause, Nigel shook her hand and smiled. A flash of jealousy had ripped through him, but he was comforted by Adam nestled at his side and thoughts of Gabi. Although he barely remembered the woman he remembered what Adam had said about how they could have never loved Gabi and Beth like they loved each other, and Nigel knew he was right. Being jealous of Beth would be childish and it would upset Adam. Even the realisation of this made Nigel feel like a good alpha.

“You’re the lady who writes about talking racoons.” Nigel smiled.

She returned the smile warmly as their hands broke apart, before looking back to Adam who was slowly coming back together. He moved a little from Nigel’s side, needing less support but still comfortably close.

“It’s so good to see you. Are you back in New York or just visiting?” She asked, her eyes darting now and then to Nigel, obviously curious. Nigel was actually fucking surprised how civil she was being - she knew Adam reasonably well, she must wonder why he’s with some thuggish looking guy with a freshly beat up face and a tattooed neck.

“Vi… visiting. Nigel’s never been before so we came to visit Harlan.” Adam stuttered before gaining more confidence as he spoke.

“You want to come up for a coffee?” Beth asked politely and Nigel felt Adam shrink back into him, it was too hard for him to go into the building.

“Thanks Beth, that’s nice of you but we’ve had a long day. I had a boxing match last night and we were just heading back to the hotel to get some rest.”

“Oh.” Beth smiled, seeming satisfied with both the response and the explanation of Nigel’s appearance. “Maybe next time you visit we can all get together and have a proper catch up.” she smiled again and then took Adam’s hand. Nigel felt him tense a little but the omega didn’t pull away. “It’s really good to see you doing so well Adam. You must email me your new address, my book is being published and I really want to send you a copy.”

Nigel was warmed to see Adam return the smile to the beta.

“That’s great. I will!” He promised.

Beth leaned in and gave him a quick peck on the cheek. “Take care.” she smiled and then started up into the building with a little wave.

Adam shivered a little and Nigel knew he was overwhelmed rather than cold. “I’d like to go back to the hotel now.” He told his alpha. Nigel nodded, resisting the urge to sweep Adam up and carry him, instead pulling him close and walking him down the street towards the nearest taxi rank.

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

The boys head home and then it's pretty much just smut...

They had returned to the hotel and gone straight to bed. Adam had felt really overwhelmed by the evening. The emotion of seeing the racoons again - they felt almost as much like old friends as Harlan - and then seeing the apartments and running into Beth.

He'd been glad to have Nigel hold him and gentle him, even if it did make him feel guilty given that Nigel was worse for wear himself. He clung tighter to the alpha now and then which caused small gasps and hisses of pain though Nigel tried to stifle them.

They spent their last day sight-seeing with Harlan before getting an evening flight home. It had been a pleasant day - Nigel and Harlan didn't get angry with each other once, and spent a lot of time talking about boxing.

Despite the odd wobble, which Nigel had reassured him was to be expected given how hard it had been for Adam to move to California in the first place, the trip to New York had been a success. The flight back to California had been better, he was calmed to know he was going home. He didn't wait for Nigel to finish paying the taxi driver when he jumped out and went straight to their apartment and into the bedroom.

"Adam?" Nigel asked after him, and he could hear the alpha lugging their small amount of luggage through the door and closing it. "Adam?"

Adam's response was muffled but he knew Nigel had found him when he entered the bedroom and gave a low chuckle. Adam looked up, feeling his cheeks redden.

"I'm just glad to be home." He explained, hoping that Nigel wasn't mad that he'd pulled some of Nigel's shirts onto the bed and snuggled into them. It was nice to have the familiarity of the smell of their apartment and their shared life.

"Me too gorgeous." Nigel said, dropping down onto the bed next to Adam. His eyes closing immediately. Adam smiled at him, he was so beautiful even when he was beat up. Adam gently traced a finger along Nigel's bearded jaw - careful to avoid the cuts and bruises. He leaned in and nuzzled at Nigel's neck, welcoming his alpha's arms when they came up and pulled him into a snuggle. It was a minute later that Adam realised Nigel was softly snoring and Adam soon joined him in slumber.

Adam wasn't sure how long had passed when he woke up, it was still dark outside but Nigel wasn't next to him. He could hear the shower running so he crept to the bathroom and peaked

in, the door not locked. He bit his lower lip and stifled a whimper when he saw Nigel standing in the shower, letting the water run over his aching muscles. He was just stood there, like he could be sleeping, the water running over the back of his head and down his back as he held himself up against the wall. Adam found it interesting that he found Nigel more increasingly attractive with every day that passed. Even with cuts and bruises he was beautiful. Adam realised he was chewing on his bottom lip and he pressed a hand to his trousers realising that he was also becoming hard looking at his alpha. He giggled.

Nigel heard him and looked over. His look was soft and sweet, a gentle smile. Adam let out a tinkle of laughter and scampered back to the bedroom. He cleared the bed and stripped out of his clothes, jumping into the middle of the bed to wait for Nigel.

He had towelled off but was still a little damp when he entered the bedroom. Adam smiled up at him and was sure he could see his own hunger reflected there. Nigel dropped down on the bed as a dead weight, almost spinning Adam off the bed. He giggled and climbed on top of Nigel who looked up at him sleepily.

“Adam… I’m sorry, I’m too tired…” Nigel ran his hands over Adam’s thighs and gave an apologetic look through almost closed eyes.

“Oh.” Adam replied. He could sense Nigel was worried about hurting his feelings but wasn’t sure why. If Nigel was tired that was ok, he could wait or maybe he could help. Adam spread his hands across Nigel’s chest. “Would you like to? If you weren’t too tired?”

“Of course darling.” Nigel still seemed worried he was hurting Adam’s feelings.

“It’s ok Nigel. I know you would if you could…” Adam bit his bottom lip again and thought it over. “I could… um, if you want to, I could um…”

“Do the heavy lifting?” Nigel suggested with a smile when Adam couldn’t find the right words or phrase. Adam frowned, he hadn’t intended to do any lifting but he had an idea of what Nigel meant so he nodded.

Nigel laughed lightly “Darling, if you can get my body working then you can do whatever you like to it.”

Adam smiled and leaned in to kiss Nigel. The kisses were slow and languid, enjoyable but low energy. Poor Nigel, he was so tired. Adam wanted to make sure he was happy and satisfied and knew that the best way to do that was sex. He was sure it wouldn’t be too difficult to get Nigel hard.

*

The kisses that Adam was lacing down his torso were actually lulling Nigel to sleep. He wanted to stay awake for his little omega, fuck he was always up for sex with Adam. But the ache in his bones and the tiredness were winning over his horniness. Or at least that was the case until Adam’s mouth enveloped his cock. It was barely hard, at least for a minute, but as Adam’s mouth and tongue worked him over he became achingly hard. He could smell

Adam's arousal in turn - the scent of his slick not as sweet and pungent as when he was in heat, but a massive turn on nonetheless.

"Ah, fuck, Adam." Nigel growled. He wanted to grab his mate, roll them over and take him, but there was just no way - he knew he didn't even have the strength in his arms much less the rest of him.

Adam pulled back, his tongue running the length of Nigel's cock as his mouth released it. He looked at Nigel, his eyes blown and wanton and a jingle of laughter escaping. The omega leaned in and kissed him deeply as he reposition, straddling Nigel and sinking down.

"It's ok Nigel, I'm going to make you feel really good." Adam told him earnestly before kissing him again.

Nigel's toes curled into the sheets and he swore in Romanian as his perfect omega's tight heat enveloped his cock. Adam sat back and arched as he took all of Nigel into himself with a small gasp. Nigel was mesmerised by him - so fucking beautiful.

Adam began to move, angling himself and moving up and down on Nigel's cock as his hands curled into fists in Nigel's chest hair, tugging it until Nigel growled and his hips bucked causing even deeper gasps from Adam. Adam settled into a rhythm, Nigel not needing to do any of the work and yet getting as much of the pleasure. This was something he'd definitely be up for again in the future - he was not an alpha who would be easily ashamed at having his omega take charge in the bedroom, in fact it was a hell of a turn on. Especially the gorgeous look on Adam's face.

"Adam, you're so fucking beautiful." He moaned out, taking in the mixture of concentration and ecstasy on the omega's face as he arched back. Nigel ran his hands up his darling's thighs and up his smooth torso before returning to the omega's hips and gripping them tightly. In response Adam tensed, his inner muscles tightening around Nigel's cock, making the alpha swear in Romanian again. Where the fuck did his omega learn this shit? He was constantly surprised and delighted with Adam's ever growing sexual repertoire - the kid must spend way too much time watching porn. Not that Nigel was complaining.

Despite his tiredness Nigel couldn't help but start thrusting until their hips were bucking together and every inch of Adam's skin was covered in a sheen of sweat. The little omega was practically gnawing through his bottom lip when he suddenly cried out and shot streams of cum over Nigel's chest. Nigel grunted in response and thrusted into the tightening grip Adam had on him until he reached his own end with another Romanian swear word.

Shaking, Adam collapsed onto Nigel's chest, his eyes closed and his lips raw from biting.

"Fucking hell Adam. You're… that was…" He disposed of words and instead pressed kisses into Adam's sweat soaked curls. Adam sighed happily and didn't move or open his eyes.

"I just wanted to take care of you when you're achey and tired." He muttered through a yawn.

Nigel laughed. "You can do that any time you like gorgeous." he replied with another kiss before they both drifted off to sleep.

*

Nigel woke first and immediately regretted that they hadn't cleaned up before going back to sleep. He knew Adam was getting much better at handling a lot of things, but he still really disliked not being clean. Before Adam had the chance to wake, Nigel pulled them out of the bed and straight to the shower, Adam drowsily coming to on the walk between rooms. The shower was on and they were sleepily lathering up before Adam had chance to really register the mess. Maybe he would have been ok, but Nigel was always going to do the right thing by his omega when and where he could.

As they got out of the shower and started to towel off Adam looked at Nigel thoughtfully.

"Nigel?"

"Yes darling." Nigel ran his towel up into his hair as he looked at Adam.

"I don't think I like going away, I like being here with you in our home. I found the last few days really overwhelming." He looked a little fretful.

Nigel smiled and pulled Adam into his arms. "I know you did darling. We don't need to go away again if you don't ever want to. You did really well, I was so proud of how well you held together when so much was going on, but we don't ever need to do that again if you don't want to." Nigel reassured.

"But, if you have other fights out of town, I should come and support you again." Adam frowned up at his alpha.

"No gorgeous, you don't need to do that, I just need to know you are home safe thinking of me and that you'll be here to look after my aching bones when I get home."

"I can do that." Adam smiled. "I'll look after your aching bones… and ride you like a cowboy when you are too tired." Adam replied happily hugging into Nigel's chest.

"Adam, what the fuck kind of pornos have you been watching?"

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